

The number of licenses issued that allow the sell of catch increased overall from 1994-2001 (Table A30). The number of fishermen reporting landings increased from 1994-1997 and then fluctuated from 1997-2001 (Table A30). The percent composition of the workforce due to commercial fishermen ranged from a low of 7.38% in 1999 to a high of 9.27% in 1994 and is the highest for all of the commercial fishing counties (Table A30).

The average fishing income declined in 1995 but then increased from 1995-1998 (Table A30). The average fishing income then fluctuated from 1998-2001 to end the period (Table A30). The percent of the average fishing income relative to the average annual wage was greater than 100% for all years except for 1995 (Table A30). The percent of the average fishing income relative to the average annual wage was greater than 200% in 1997-1998 (Table A30).

The increases and declines in the average fishing income for commercial fishermen in Hyde County are strongly correlated with the increases and declines in landings. The decline in the average fishing income and landings in 1999 is probably due to the hurricanes of 1999. The decline in the average fishing income and landings in 2001 is most likely related to a decline in the hard blue crab harvest for commercial fishermen in Hyde County. These trends suggest that a large portion of commercial fishermen participate in fall fisheries. Also, the trends suggest that commercial fishermen generate more earnings than the average worker in Hyde County with commercial fishermen earning more than 100% of the average worker during the 1994-2001 period, except for 1995, and did extraordinarily well in 1997-1998 earning more than 200% than the average worker.

New Hanover

The total landings for New Hanover County exhibited a decreasing trend from 1994-1996 (Table 75). Landings then increased in 1997 but after 1997 an overall declining trend is observed (Table 75). The total landings for New Hanover County